

Preliminary Amendment
Serial No. 09/359,562
Page 2 of 13

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Amended) A program guide for an interactive information distribution system having provider equipment and subscriber equipment comprising:
a video layer of said program guide having at least one user selectable object associated with selectable video content sent from said provider equipment to said subscriber equipment, said video layer sent from said provider equipment to said subscriber equipment; and
a graphics layer of said program guide, where the graphics layer selectively overlays and provides emphasis and de-emphasis of said at least one user selectable object in the video layer.
2. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein said video layer contains a video region and a graphical region.
3. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein said program guide is generated in a central location of said information distribution system.
4. (Original) The program guide of claim 2 wherein the video region contains a video barker having associated audio.
5. (Original) The program guide of claim 2 wherein said graphical region contains a list of program titles.
6. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein said emphasis and de-emphasis is performed by masking or revealing an object.

296130_1

Preliminary Amendment
Serial No. 09/359,562
Page 3 of 13

7. (Original) The program guide of claim 6 wherein, to perform said masking and revealing, the graphics layer selectively changes an opacity of a region of the graphics layer.
8. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein the video layer and graphics layer are contained in an applet.
9. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein an identity of an emphasized object is controlled by a viewer.
10. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein the emphasized object is a selectable object.
11. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein the emphasized object is highlighted.
12. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein said video layer contains a plurality of objects and said graphics layer emphasizes a select number of the objects and de-emphasizes a remainder of objects.
13. (Original) The program guide of claim 12 wherein said objects are a list of program titles.
14. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein the graphics layer is prestored in a user terminal.
15. (Original) The program guide of claim 1 wherein the graphics layer is transmitted to a user terminal.
16. (Amended) A method of interaction for a program guide:

296130_1

Preliminary Amendment
Serial No. 09/359,562
Page 4 of 13

generating, within service provider equipment of an information distribution system, a bitstream representing said program guide having a video layer and a graphics layer disposed over said video layer;

communicating said bitstream to subscriber equipment;

converting, within said subscriber equipment, said bitstream into a display of said program guide; and

selectively providing at least one of emphasis and de-emphasis of at least one user selectable video layer object associated with selectable video content sent from said provider equipment using said graphics layer.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of producing a mask/reveal overlay within said subscriber equipment.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein said producing step further comprises extracting said a mask/reveal overlay from said graphics layer in said bitstream.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein said mask/reveal overlay is dynamically updated using information from said graphics layer that is extracted from the bitstream.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising identifying objects in the display through manipulation of a user input device.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said identifying step further comprises the step of emphasizing an object with respect to other objects.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 further comprising the step of selecting an emphasized object to initiate a new context.

296130_1

Preliminary Amendment
Serial No. 09/359,562
Page 5 of 13

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said new context is a preview video.
24. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said context is an advertisement video.
25. (Original) The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of extracting a different program guide from said bitstream.
26. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein each said program guide has audio that is common to multiple program guides.
27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein all object identification functions are preformed locally to the subscriber equipment.
28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising identifying an object and selecting the identified object to synchronously jump from broadcast mode to pointcast mode.
29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of returning to the broadcast mode when a pointcast transmission ends.
30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein identification and selection of an object causes the graphics layer to emphasize certain objects with respect to remaining objects.
31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising the steps of:
selecting an emphasized object in said program guide;
communicating the selection to service provider equipment; and

296130_1

Preliminary Amendment
Serial No. 09/359,562
Page 6 of 13

sending, from said service provider equipment, a multi-media bitstream corresponding to said selected object.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 wherein said multi-media bitstream is a video-on-demand movie.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising the steps of:

selecting an emphasized object in said program guide;

causing an event in the service provider equipment, where said event is on or more of tuning to an analog channel, tuning to a digital channel or launching a resident capability in the service provider equipment.

296130_1

BEST AVAILABLE COPY